

Welcome back for the 5th week of the Afterlife series. My name is Chris Fluit and I want to welcome you to Redemption Church in Plano, TX. We are a church that believes in Heaven!

The Afterlife is a lot more than just Heaven & Hell

The afterlife is a little more complicated than you might think.

We have been creating an **AFTERLIFE TIMELINE 7**

We have talked in previous weeks about the Rapture, the Tribulation, the Millennial reign, 2 judgments, 2 resurrections, and the 2nd death. I encourage you to check out the podcast and the sermon notes we have posted to our website. www.redemptionplano.com

Today we are going to talk about **HEAVEN**

The Bible tells us of an eternal resting place for those that believe. We are going to learn about Heaven today.

What is Heaven like?

Take a moment to think of a visual of Heaven.

Popular culture sometimes bleeds into our picture of heaven.

- We see fat chubby babies with wings playing harps.
- We think that we turn into angels.
- We think that we will be in an eternal worship service singing a 1 word song that will never end.
- We picture St Peter at the gate asking for our name to see if it is on the list.
- There is a lot of white. There are a lot of clouds.

What is heaven really like? The Bible spends time telling us of the beauty of heaven.

Heaven is Beautiful

Heaven is described as a Holy city. It is called the New Jerusalem. (Revelation 21:2 & 10)

It is a shining city on a tall mountain. Its description is reminiscent of Christ's command to be the light of the world, a City set on a hill that can't be hid (Matthew 5:14)

The description of heaven is also a description of the bride! The Angel tells John in Revelation 21 that he will show him "THE BRIDE, THE WIFE OF THE LAMB" and then the angel shows him the city. This is God's way of telling us that the beauty of heaven is equal to the beauty of His bride. (Revelation 21:9)

The city had high walls with 12 gates. The gates had the names of the 12 tribes of Israel written upon them. 3 Gates to the East, 3 to the north, 3 to the south, 3 to the west. Each Gate was guarded by an Angel. (Revelation 21:12-13)

The wall had 12 foundations and on them the name of the 12 Apostles of the Lamb (Revelation 21:14)

The wall was made of jasper, the city is pure Gold. The foundation is decorated with every kind of precious stone... The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth ruby, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth turquoise, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. (Revelation 21:18-20)

No one decorates the foundation of a house... they decorate the house but not the foundation. EVERYTHING IN HEAVEN IS BEAUTIFUL! The foundation is more beautiful than anything on earth.

The gates were each made of a single pearl. (Revelation 21:21)

The Angel that was showing this to John pulls out a measuring rod of gold (I wish I had one of those!) and measures the city, its gates, & its walls. (Revelation 21:15-17) The City is 1400 miles in height width & depth. (Revelation 21:16) The walls are 200 feet thick (Revelation 21:17)

Heaven is a city with no need for a sun or a moon, for the Glory of the Lord gives it light.. (Revelation 21:23) There is no night & the gates of the city are never shut. (Revelation 21:25)

There is no Temple in the City...

Revelation 21:22 I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.(NIV)

There will be no Churches in heaven. No more denominations arguing... I'm Baptist and I'm right.. I'm Methodist and I'm right.. I'm universalist and aren't we are all right...? No more of that.

There will be no pastors because we will all have direct access to God. You won't have to ask me what God's word says... We won't have to struggle with what God wants us to do.. We will go right to the throne.

There will be no gifts of the Spirit... no need for prophecy, tongues, gifts of knowledge, the gift of healing... (1 Corinthians 13:8)

1 Corinthians 13:12 Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.(NIV)

We presently operate "IN PART" but then in the presence of God we will operate in "FULLNESS."

Do You ever feel broken? I do. I feel like a piece of IKEA furniture that is missing some pieces... I am constantly asking "how does this piece fit and what is this for?" I am operating in part, but in heaven... FULLNESS!

You see In Heaven Jesus has made "Everything New"

Revelation 21:5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!"

Revelation 21:4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."(NIV)

Heaven is Beautiful

Heaven is beautiful. Not because of the gold and jewels. God makes the beauty of Heaven match the beauty of His bride. (Revelation 21:9-27)

What makes Heaven beautiful to God is the presence of His Bride.

What makes Heaven beautiful to His bride is the presence of Her Groom.

Does anyone want to go to heaven? It is beautiful.

What will we do in heaven?

A lot of people have trouble with the idea of heaven. They can't figure out what they will do there...

I want to give you 8 things that you will be doing in Heaven.

1 Worship

In the book of Revelation we see worship taking place in Heaven.

Angels worship Him singing Holy, Holy, Holy.

We see the 24 elders and the living creatures worshipping.

We see Jesus, the Lion & the Lamb take center stage. Every eye beholds him and cries out WORTHY!

Revelation 7:9-10 there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. 10 And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

We sang that great song by Jennie Lee Riddle today, revelation song. Her lyrics came straight from Scripture. The power in those words is prophetic... there is a powerful day coming. Do you realize it Church?

Do you realize that every nation...

Do your realize that every language...

Do you realize every skin color...

Do you realize every people from every social economic background...

Do you realize those that lost their lives for the Gospel...

Do you realize those that faced tribulation but kept the faith...

Do you realize that you are going to stand in a multitude than no one could count and declare SALVATION BELONGS TO OUR GOD!

If that does not excite you then you might need an altar checkup today. You might need to fall in love with the presence of the Lord.

There is an atmosphere of Worship in Heaven. But this worship goes beyond a worship service allotment of time. You need to understand that worship occurs every moment you are in right standing with God. In heaven we will all be in right standing with God... never are we to be separated from God again. That means that every moment... whatever you are doing... will be worshipful in heaven.

We will not be standing and singing for all of eternity. I have 7 more things you will be doing in heaven, but worship will be present in all of them.

2 We will Reign

Revelation 22:5 There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.(NIV)

This lines up with some of the parable teaching of Christ where the master returns and invites the faithful servants to reign over more.

There will be authority, roles, & responsibility in heaven. This is something that God ordained before the fall of man.

Right now on Earth we have been given the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8) and Ephesians 1:14 tells us the Holy Spirit is just the earnest of our inheritance. The radical Holy Spirit power you have experienced is just a small down payment of the reigning power you will have in Heaven.

Be faithful church. If you are faithful over few things, He will make you ruler over many. You don't have to wait for heaven to start ruling and reigning with Christ.

3 We will see Jesus

We will see God manifest in the flesh, the messiah Jesus Christ.

Have you ever imagined that moment?

The prophet Zechariah declared. “They will look upon the one they pierced...” (Zechariah 12:10) Zechariah spoke of this and the fact that this sight would bring mourning & grief, but when we see Jesus in Heaven we will be changed forever (1 John 3:2)

When John the Revelator saw Jesus, he fell at His feet as though dead. (Revelation 1:17) (Jesus speaks to John and says “do not be afraid”)

What will you do? How will you feel?

4 We will Rest

God worked 6 days and rested on the 7th day. He has not rested since... But in heaven we all will enter into a Sabbath with God.

The rest that we will experience in heaven clearly is not due to the absence of work, for we will work, we will serve and do all sorts of things in heaven... But we will never weary or tire. Everything we do will be in the Sabbath rest that comes from God.

In contrast, of those in hell, Revelation 11:14 says, “They have no rest day or night.”

Jesus told us, “Come unto me and I will give you REST.” This could be what He had in mind.

5 Serving

Revelation 22:3 No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.(NIV)

Those who lovingly serve the Lord Jesus on the earth will serve the Lord forever. Servants of the Lord will feel at home in heaven.

Do you know how to serve the Lord with gladness as Psalm 100:2 commands us?

Heaven is not an eternity free from work. If you're seeking to be free from work forever, don't be going to heaven! This comes from a misunderstanding: some people think that work is something that came from the fall and the curse after man fell into sin - that is not the case at all.

Toil in work, the sweat of their brow and the indignity of work came from the fall - but God created work as something good in His original creation. Adam & Eve had work to do before their fall into sin. Work reveals purpose, and in heaven you will have purpose.

We will be engaged in service in heaven - all the more reason why you should be engaged in it down here as a believer.

I have a concern. Many people call themselves Christians but do little to no service for the Lord.

- You will be able to serve without weakness or limitation.
- There are those who are disqualified from serving as they would like in this present world, but in heaven they will be restored to serve with no judgements on them.
- Revelation 1:5 tells of kings who are also priests who minister to the Lord. That is us in heaven. Serving the Lord, going into the Holy of Holies... into His presence as only the High Priest could do.

6 Being Served

Take a look at what Jesus says in His parable of the servant who is prepared for his master's return.

Luke 12:37 It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them.(NIV)

Jesus says that the master will serve. Jesus, the Master, will serve you for all eternity.

Jesus knelt and washed the feet of his disciples. He will continue serving us into eternity.

The Lord Jesus, as He has served us on this earth coming in His incarnation, through His crucifixion, His resurrection, through His

ascension, His intercession at the right hand of God, His coming again in glory - He is going to, when He gets us home to the Father's house, serve us forever and ever and ever. Amen.

We will serve, and we will be served.

7 We will Learn

God is Omniscient. He knows all.

We are not omniscient. We know very little... but Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 says that on the other side of the afterlife “he will know even as I am known.” Paul says his knowledge will increase in heaven.

What will God teach us in heaven? What a question!?

Surely you believe Jesus will have more to reveal to us in Heaven. He is the Creator, God.

8 We will Fellowship

Heaven is going to be a great fellowship. Besides God there will be angels, other believers.

This will be a fellowship without disunity. The Prayer of Jesus in John 17:11 will be answered... He prayed “that we would be one as the father & son were one.

Many people ask “Will I know my loved ones in Heaven?” The answer is yes. You will not only know your loved ones... you will know everyone.

In Matthew 17, Jesus took Peter, James, & John to the mount of transfiguration. 2 People showed up that those disciples would never recognize, because these people lived centuries earlier. But Peter called Moses & Elijah by name.

Just as Peter had momentary fellowship with Moses & Elijah – You will know the names of everyone in Heaven... You will know their deeds... You will have fellowship with them...

They will also know your name, deeds, and have fellowship with you.

Will there be marriage in Heaven?

Matthew 22:30 At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.(NIV)

This does not mean we will become angels. It means that we won't marry or be married any longer.

There are some people that rejoice in this... There are others that are really saddened by this knowledge. To you who rejoice... these altars are open. To you who are saddened listen up!

When you are married, you are committed to one person above all. And it is wonderful to be fully committed to one another. In heaven that commitment is not done away with... it is expanded.

- Everyone will be fully committed to Christ.
- Everyone will be fully committed to each other.

Where do we go after we die?

Is my loved one in heaven right now? They had faith and believed on the Lord. Are they present with the Lord or sleeping in their grave?

The Bible references death as sleep. In the Old Testament it says "they slept with their fathers" meaning they died.

1 Thessalonians 4:14 gives hope concerning those who have died, it describes them as "fallen asleep."

Everyone who has ever died is asleep but will one day be awakened by Jesus. ...BUT THERE IS MORE...

2 Corinthians 5:8 Paul says "to be away from your body is to be at home with the Lord."

So are we asleep..? or are we present with the lord...? Or we with the lord, but asleep? I can't be certain but here is my opinion.

Your body is asleep... Your body rests somewhere. When Christ awakens the body it will rise... but your soul is not asleep. I have a scripture that causes me to say this.

Revelation 6:9 tells of the souls of the martyred who are in God's presence. These souls talk and ask the Lord "How long?" These souls were somewhat aware of what was going on in the earth.

It is not incorrect to say "grandmother is with Jesus" if she had saving faith in Jesus.

These souls are body-less, but present with the Lord. Their bodies are asleep in the grave. The souls of the dead will be united with their bodies at the Rapture, or one of the 2 Resurrections. We will discuss the resurrections on the last week of this series.

Those who are dead in Christ, are present with Christ... but those who are not in Christ are found in another place. We will talk about that next week

I am about to open these altars for a time of prayer... but first:

Where is heaven?

The Bible speaks of 3 heavens.

1st heaven is the sky

2nd heaven is outer space

Paul speaks of the 3rd heaven which is God's dwelling.

We are speaking of this 3rd Heaven.

Heaven & Earth are separate places. Heaven is God's throne, Earth is His footstool (Isaiah 66:1).

But look again at Revelation 21:1-3

Revelation 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.(NIV)

Revelation 21:2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.(NIV)

Revelation 21:3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them.

They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.(NIV)

God is not taking you from earth to heaven... God is bringing Heaven to Earth.

You can learn a lot about God here...

You might have thought God wants to take you to some far off cosmic place to show you spiritual mysteries... But instead God is coming down to your earth to walk in fellowship with you... just like He walked with Adam & Eve in the garden.

Heaven is God's dwelling. Do you want to dwell with Him right now?

Do you want to serve the Lord today?

Do you want God to serve you and meet your needs today?

Do you want to worship..?